

# **Congressman George Radanovich**

Legislative Accomplishments – 109<sup>th</sup> Congress (2005-2006)

## **Committees:**

- ♦ House Resources Committee
  - Subcommittee on Water and Power, Chairman
  - Subcommittee on National Parks
- ♦ House Energy and Commerce Committee
  - Subcommittee on Commerce Trade and Consumer Protection
  - Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality
  - Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet

**AGRICULTURE**

**AID TO AMERICANS**

**BANKING**

**COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION**

**CONSTITUENT SERVICES**

**DEFENSE**

**EDUCATION**

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**ENERGY**

**FAMILY VALUES**

**FEDERAL LANDS ISSUES**

**FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**HEALTH CARE**

**IN THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT**

**IMMIGRATION**

**JUDICIAL ISSUES**

**LABOR**

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**TRANSPORTATION**

**VETERANS**

**WATER AND POWER SUBCOMMITTEE**

# Agriculture

## Congressman Sponsors Bill for Farmers to Continue Using Methyl Bromide—H.R. 1257

Rep. Radanovich was the author of H.R. 1257, a bipartisan measure supporting the U.S. State Department's Critical Use Exemption (CUE) request for methyl bromide in 2006 and 2007. Methyl bromide is being phased out per the Montreal Protocol treaty. An exemption process is allowed under the treaty to allow for the continued use of methyl bromide for critical uses.

Farmers of numerous crops in the Valley and throughout the nation depend upon methyl bromide, a pesticide primarily used for pre-planting purposes. Farmers need a CUE to use methyl bromide since there is no viable, cost-effective alternative to methyl bromide, the need for a CUE is addressed by the Congressman's bill.

Congressman Radanovich continues to work with the Administration, including the State Department and the Environmental Protection Administration, and Congress to ensure the Montreal Protocol process is treating U.S. farmers fairly.

## Agriculture Secretary Johanns Visited Fresno

On August 12th, 2005, Secretary Johanns of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) visited Fresno with Rep. Radanovich and other local members of Congress to hold a listening session for farmers in the area. Sec. Johanns' listened to growers and ranchers to help him understand the issues that need to be addressed in the upcoming Farm Bill.

## Peach Tree Pull

In 2005, Rep. Radanovich helped the CA Canned Peach Association, which represents numerous peach growers in the Valley, obtain a \$5 million peach tree pull. The request had been pending approval before Office of Management and Budget for nearly a year.

This peach tree pull allowed farmers to remove trees, reducing an oversupply in the industry. The action will save the federal government money, reducing the number of cling peaches the government must purchase under the Section 32 Bonus Buy program.

## House Agriculture Committee, Subcommittee on Horticulture and Livestock Hearing in the Valley

The Congressman attended an official House Agriculture Committee field hearing in Lodi on August 26th to hear testimony from farmers and ag industry officials regarding Valley agricultural issues, including: trade, crop insurance, pests and diseases, the Section 32 bonus buy program and many other major issues. The hearing was an important opportunity for Members of Congress from across the United States to hear how these issues before Congress impact Valley farmers.

## Garlic and Unfair Trade

The Customs and Border Protection (CBP) was sent a letter in June from the Congressman and other Valley members requesting that CBP investigate the undervaluation of dehydrated garlic from China. This issue impacts growers and processors of dehydrated garlic in our region. Last year, this request was made and little progress has been made to resolve the issue. Rep. Radanovich has continued to put pressure on CBP to review this matter and enforce the law.

## Increasing Conservation Easement Tax Deductions for Farmers

The pension bill, H.R. 4, passed by the House and Senate and was signed into law on August 14<sup>th</sup>. It included a provision that expands the deductions for landowners who donate conservation easements. The Congressman had asked that this language be included in the bill via a letter sent in May.

The language raised the charitable deduction limit from 30 percent of adjusted gross income to 50 percent of adjusted gross income for qualified conservation contributions, provided that such contribution does not prevent the use of the donated land for farming or ranching purposes. The charitable deduction limit was raised to 100 percent of adjusted gross income for eligible farmers and ranchers. The provision allows a taxpayer to carry-forward the deduction for 15 years, provided that the taxpayer is a farmer or rancher in the year of the carry-forward. The provision is effective for two years through the end of 2007.

Tax deductions for conservation easement donations help working farmers remain in agriculture - rather than opting for the often more profitable avenue of selling their land to developers.

## **2007 Farm Bill**

Rep. Radanovich met with, and continues to discuss with, Valley farmers and ranchers regarding the 2007 Farm Bill to ensure their needs are met in the upcoming legislation. Farm Bills are developed every six years and comprise provisions on farm programs in areas such as research, conservation, marketing, trade and pest matters within USDA. Improvement of marketing and research programs for specialty crops are major priorities for the Congressman as the bill is developed. The Congressman is pleased that specialty crop growers have come together to submit a joint request to Congress that reflects their needs. He looks forward to working with all farmers and ranchers to create better USDA programs for the Valley.

## **EAT Healthy America Act—H.R. 6193**

The Congressman was a cosponsor of important legislation for specialty crop farmers to increase market access, encourage and facilitate consumption of nutritious products, fund research programs and increase opportunities for family farmers in conservation programs. Unfortunately, the measure did not pass the House prior to the end of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress. However, the Congressman is pursuing the goals of this bill within the 2007 Farm Bill.

# **Aid to Americans**

## **Hurricane Katrina and Rita Relief**

The devastation resulting from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita led to a change in plans in the FY 2006 budget. Congress responded quickly by allocating \$62.3 billion towards Hurricane relief. \$23.4 billion of this money was reallocated from the 2006 Defense spending bill.

The Congressman joined with his colleagues in the House and Senate to act quickly and provide the funds necessary to support rescue and rebuilding operations in those areas ravaged by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Just four days after Hurricane Katrina last made landfall, Congress appropriated \$10.5 billion to aid Homeland Security and the Department of Defense in providing assistance to those affected by Hurricane Katrina.

## **CA Ag Disaster Declarations**

On August 14<sup>th</sup>, the Congressman signed a letter of support to USDA Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns requesting a disaster declaration as a result of the heat wave that hit CA in July. Over 16,000 cows in the Valley alone and one million chickens and turkeys died in the state during the excessive heat wave. High temperatures also caused losses to fruit, vegetable and nut crops. Several counties in the 19<sup>th</sup> Congressional district were designated as disasters and emergency loans were made available.

## **Children's Hope Act—H.R. 4400**

The Congressman was a cosponsor of H.R. 4400, the Children's Hope Act, which allows a tax credit, up to \$100 (\$200 for joint returns), for charitable contributions to an education investment organization that disburses 90 percent of its contributions to provide grants to students for elementary and secondary education expenses, if at least 50 percent of such disbursements go to students who qualify for free or reduced-cost school lunches.

# **Banking**

## **Federal Finance Housing Reform Act—H.R. 1461**

Congressman Radanovich joined together with colleagues in the House to pass legislation to better regulate federal housing lenders. The major banking issue during the first session of the 109th Congress was the Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac Oversight bill. Recent accounting scandals led to calls for a government regulator of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. H.R. 1461, the Federal Finance Housing Reform Act, establishes the Federal Housing Finance Agency, which will have supervisory and regulatory authority over Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. The Congressman supported this bill with strong bipartisan support. However, this bill did not receive a vote in the U.S. Senate and died at the close of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

## **Credit Union Regulatory Improvement Act—H.R. 2317**

The Congressman was a cosponsor of H.R. 2317, the Credit Union Regulatory Improvement Act. Credit Unions serve their communities by providing lending services to their members, often at rates lower than commercial banks. The local nature of credit unions promotes economic growth in their communities by injecting local capital back into the community. This widely bipartisan legislation modifies federal banking statutes governing credit unions to promote economic growth.

# **Commerce and Consumer Protection**

## **Securely Protect Yourself Against Cyber Trespass Act (the SPY Act)—H.R. 29**

Representative Radanovich was a cosponsor and strong supporter of H.R. 29, the Securely Protect Yourself Against Cyber Trespass Act. "Spyware," software that gathers personally identifiable information from one's computer, has become a major problem affecting businesses and individuals across the country. It is reported that 75 percent of all computer performance problems that slow down computers and cause freezes are related to spyware. Most individuals have no idea that applications they download have spyware bundled in them.

This legislation, which was approved by the House on May 23, 2005, will provide greater privacy to the American public while allowing for the retrieval of personal information with consent. It will require any entity or individual offering spyware over the Internet to post an agreement that would clearly and conspicuously inform the computer user of the presence and intended function of the spyware. Additionally, and most importantly, it requires obtaining proper consent from the user. Furthermore, the company offering the spyware must identify itself and provide a proper physical and e-mail address. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) would create regulations to enforce H.R. 29, and those found in violation would suffer penalties under federal law.

## **Data Security and Personal Information—H.R. 4127**

The Congressman was an original cosponsor of this legislation to direct the FTC to write rules requiring security for personal information that take into account the size, nature, and scope of the person's activities, the current state of technology, and the cost of implementing security procedures.

The bill requires entities to have a security policy that explains the "collection, use, sale, other dissemination, and security" of the data they hold. Most importantly, the legislation calls for the entity to provide for nationwide notice in the event of a security breach. Congressman Radanovich worked with his colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee to ensure passage of this bill. It received the unanimous support of all 41 members of the Committee on March 29, 2006. However, this bill was not heard on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives and died at the close of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Congressman Radanovich continues to work as a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee Subcommittee on Commerce Trade and Consumer Protection to protect American consumers from malicious and destructive software.

## **The Deleting Online Predators Act – H.R. 5319**

Congressman Radanovich joined with a bipartisan group of his colleagues to pass legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives to keep our children safe while they surf the internet. This act would require schools and libraries to enforce policies which would: prohibit minors' access to social networking sites or chat rooms unless used for educational purposes and under adult supervision, and prevent access to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography or may otherwise be harmful to minors. This bill also directed the federal government to establish a resource website for parents, teachers and other concerned citizens to educate themselves on the dangers of online predators and the potential dangers posed by use of the internet by children. This bill passed the House on July 26, 2007 with a vote of 410-15.

# Constituent Services

Congressman Radanovich maintains a staff of three full time case workers in his Fresno District Office to assist his constituents in their dealings with the federal government. These professional staff members have a combined 10 years of experience in assisting constituents with everything from obtaining passports and visas, resolving issues regarding Social Security and Veterans benefits and many other federal services and agencies.

In 2005 and 2006, Congressman Radanovich was contacted by over 2000 constituents asking that he intervene on their behalf. Of these 2000 cases that were opened, approximately 1660 cases, or 83%, were resolved. Congressman Radanovich is happy to assist his constituents in this capacity. If you feel you have an issue with the federal government that may benefit from some assistance by Congressman Radanovich, please do not hesitate to contact his Fresno District Office at (559) 449 2490.

# Defense

## 144<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing

Congressman Radanovich has taken the lead on a letter to the Secretary of the Air Force outlining the concerns for the future of the 144<sup>th</sup>. The Air National Guard's 144<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, located in Fresno, is in jeopardy of losing their status as the sole air defense main operating base in California. The pre-BRAC air defense structure for the 144<sup>th</sup> Fighter includes changing the planes they currently fly, the F-16 Fighting Falcon, for the F-15 Eagle. However, according to the 2005 BRAC Commission the 144<sup>th</sup>'s F-16's are scheduled to be replaced with newer F-16's, not F-15's. The F-16's are scheduled to begin retiring in 2012, at which time there is no plan to replace the F-16's.

## Global War on Terror

On June 15th and 16th, Congress devoted 10 hours to debate the Global War on Terror. Congressman Radanovich went on the Floor to express support for H. Res. 861, declaring that the United States will prevail in the Global War on Terror. A press release with the full text of Rep. Radanovich's statement was released on June 16th.

## Operation Brotherhood of the Badge—Body Armor for Iraqi police

The Congressman secured shipping to Baghdad for the third shipment of surplus police equipment by local law enforcement volunteers. The equipment collected by this organization is used to help outfit Iraqi police with equipment and body armor.

# Education

## Higher Education Reauthorization

In April 2006, the House considered and passed H.R. 609, the College Access and Opportunity Act of 2006, which reauthorizes the Higher Education Act. This bill passed with Rep. Radanovich's support. H.R.609 will expand access to higher education for low and middle income families by: strengthening Pell Grants, student aid, student access, and minority serving institutions, reducing red tape for students and graduates, removing barriers for non-traditional students, empowering consumers through "sunshine" and transparency in college costs & accreditation.

## Assistance for Yosemite Schoolchildren—S. 136

S. 136 was approved by Congress in December thanks to the efforts of both Congressman Radanovich and Sen. Dianne Feinstein. S. 136 included a provision to authorize funding for schoolchildren in Yosemite National Park. This provision was authored by Rep. Radanovich.

The legislation authorizes the Department of the Interior to provide supplemental funding for children attending the schools within Yosemite National Park. They are the children of Park employees who live a significant distance from any other public schools. The bill provides assistance for three schools serving Yosemite National Park: Yosemite Valley, El Portal Elementary and Wawona Elementary.

Passage of this measure is a huge achievement for the schoolchildren in Yosemite who are in critical need of this assistance. Without it, they may lose not just their teachers, but also their schools. S. 136 was signed into law by President Bush on December 20, 2005.

After Congressman Radanovich's Yosemite Schools bill passed and was signed into law in December 2005, Congressman Radanovich diligently worked with the Administration to secure funding for two school districts serving Yosemite school children. This measure, H.R. 353, provided much needed funds for three small schools in Yosemite National Park, which serve students who live in the Park or whose parents are employed by Yosemite National Park. The Bass Lake Joint Unified School District and Mariposa Union School District received \$66,000 from the Department of the Interior in 2006. A portion of the funds have been allocated, and the Congressman is working to ensure the remainder is provided to the schools.

## The Environment

### The Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act (TESRA)—H.R. 3824

The Congressman supported the momentous passage of TESRA both in the Resources Committee and on the House floor. This bill updates and improves the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973. It replaces the critical habitat program with a more integrated recovery planning process that includes the identification of specific areas that are important to the conservation of the species. These areas are then given priority in recovery efforts.

### Radanovich Held Endangered Species Act (ESA) Hearing in June 2005

Chairman Radanovich held a hearing in Washington, DC with local water managers from throughout the nation, including the Valley, to discuss how to bring commonsense to the ESA. These leaders are in the ESA trenches everyday. They are the ones on the ground who see how the ESA really works and they are the ones with the most at stake, who may have more workable.

The witnesses discussed the obstacles they face under the current ESA regulatory process and provided their views on how to address the problems legislatively. The information garnered from this ESA hearing is being used to develop a comprehensive ESA bill that Chairman Pombo intends to submit to Congress soon. The bill is expected to require peer-reviewed science to ensure balance in the ESA decision-making process and will likely include improvements of the critical habitat designation process, among other provisions.

## Energy

### Energy Policy Act of 2005—H.R. 6

On April 21, 2005 the House of Representatives approved H.R. 6, Energy Policy Act of 2005, on a strong bipartisan basis. Representative Radanovich voted in support of this legislation, which creates a new national energy strategy by encouraging the use of renewable energy, increasing energy efficiency and improving energy infrastructure. The conference report was passed by the House on July 29, 2005 by a vote of 275-156 and was signed into law by President Bush on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

This bill gives the San Joaquin Valley cleaner and more reliable energy and jobs to improve our economy. By encouraging the use of clean fuels and renewable energy sources, this legislation will boost our economy and clean our air. The bill provides incentives for the use of biomass, often a byproduct of agriculture, as a renewable energy source. The legislation also provides incentives for the use of clean energy technologies.

Congressman Radanovich successfully included two provisions in the legislation. The first amendment was a hydroelectric licensing provision which helps to ensure the future reliability of our nation's electricity grid. In addition, the language helps the U.S. to maintain a diverse, competitive, domestic energy supply. This language protects our nation's environmental resources while preserving the future viability of hydropower, our nation's largest renewable, emissions-free resource. The second amendment authored by the Congressman requires the Secretary of Interior to study existing hydro facilities throughout the nation to determine opportunities for increased hydroelectric power. Such action will provide the federal government and our citizens with an understanding of where it is most economically and technically feasible to augment hydroelectric power.

Specifically, H.R. 6 encourages the use of renewable energy by:

- Improving the regulations governing hydroelectric dams to allow for more hydroelectric generation

The bill encourages the use of clean fuels by:

- ♦ Launching a state-of-the-art program to have emission-free hydrogen fuel cell vehicles on the road by 2020
- ♦ Providing grants to state and local governments to acquire alternative fueled vehicles, hybrids, and ultra-low sulfur vehicles
- ♦ Offering financial incentives for the production of electricity from renewable and alternative fuel sources such as wind, solar, biomass, and geothermal
- ♦ Providing significant incentives for clean coal technology to vastly reduce air emissions by coal-fired power plants

The bill improves energy infrastructure by:

- ♦ Mandating enforceable reliability standards
- ♦ Providing incentives for transmission grid improvements and making it easier to site new transmission lines
- ♦ Making an investment in our aged transmission system to increase the reliability of our nation's power grid to help prevent future blackouts

The Energy Policy Act will foster hundreds of thousands of new jobs and help preserve many more.

## Arctic National Wildlife Refuge—ANWR

H.R. 6, the Energy Policy Act of 2005, was passed by both the House and Senate and signed into law by the President in August of 2005. In April, the House passed its version of H.R. 6, which authorizes oil and gas leasing in ANWR. H.R. 6 also limits the surface area that can be covered by certain oil production and support facilities to 2,000 acres of the 1.5 million acres of the defined Coastal Plain. The Congressman supported these provisions in the Energy bill as it moved out of committee and onto the House floor for a vote. However, ANWR was not included in the final version of the Energy Policy Act that was signed into law.

Additionally, Congressman Radanovich strongly supported a provision in the initial draft of the Deficit Reduction Act, which would have allowed for Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) and Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) drilling. These provisions would have given way to a combined \$2.7 billion in federal savings as well as increased domestic energy production capacity. Unfortunately, this provision was not included in the final budget reconciliation.

Opponents of opening up ANWR to development believe exploration would harm the pristine environment, produce only a six-month supply and harm the caribou herds that use the coastal plain as calving grounds. However, the evidence does not support these claims. ANWR encompasses more than 19 million acres of land, yet drilling would occur on only 2,000 acres, or less than 0.001 percent of the land. Oil seeps out of the ground naturally on the coastal plain, damaging the tundra, and has done so long before humans ever used oil to produce energy. Estimates place the amount of recoverable reserves at 10.3 billion barrels, enough to supply about 10 percent of U.S. oil needs for the next 25 years.

Because drilling would only occur during the winter to guarantee no damage to the tundra or the environment, the porcupine caribou herd would not be affected, since they are only present on the coastal plain for a few short months in the summer. Since the Alaskan Pipeline was constructed, the caribou herd has increased from about 3,000 to more than 27,000, clearly showing humans and caribou can peacefully coexist. For these reasons, the Congressman will continue to support ANWR.

## Gasoline for America's Security Act of 2005—H.R. 3893

On October 7, 2005, the House of Representatives approved H.R. 3893. This bill expedites the construction of new refining capacity in the U.S. and provides reliable and affordable energy for the American people. The bill sets forth a statutory framework in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita to: (1) increase refinery capacity for gasoline, heating oil, diesel fuel, and jet fuel; (2) reduce environmental and other regulations affecting refineries under the Clean Air Act; and (3) coordinate permitting requirements and other regulations affecting refineries at the federal, state, and local levels.

# Family Values

## The Child Interstate Abortion Notification Act—H.R. 748

The Child Interstate Abortion Notification Act (CIANA), which was passed in the House in 2005, makes it a federal crime to transport a minor across a state line, with the intent that the minor obtain an abortion without the consent of a parent or legal guardian. Should this consent be given, the physician performing the abortion must give notice to the parent or legal guardian, in person, 24 hours before the procedure. It is important to have parental involvement in this sensitive and emotional issue relating to minors. As a member of the Pro-Life Caucus, Congressman Radanovich continues to work

to promote a pro-life message in Congress. The Congressman voted for CIANA and on April 27, it passed the U.S. House of Representatives with a vote of 270-157.

## **The Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act – H.R. 356**

Congressman Radanovich joined together with 142 of his colleagues to cosponsor the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act. This legislation would require those choosing to perform a late term abortion be informed of the medical evidence supporting that the unborn child will feel significant pain in the process of performing the abortion.

## **Defense of Marriage Amendment—H.J. Res. 39**

The Defense of Marriage Amendment, H.J. Res. 39, cosponsored by Congressman Radanovich, was referred to the House Judiciary Committee. H.J. Res. 39 would define marriage in the U.S. as a legal union of one man and one woman, prohibit the federal and state judiciaries from redefining marriage as anything but the union of one man and one woman, and constitutionally prohibit one state from imposing their policy on other states. Congressman Radanovich strongly supports the institution of marriage because it protects our children, the most vulnerable in society, and helps ensure that they grow up in a safe, healthy environment. He will continue to work toward this end in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress

## **Embryonic Stem Cell Research**

H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005, passed out of the House of Representatives on May 24, 2005, without the support of Rep. Radanovich. It was approved in the Senate on July 18, 2006. Using the first veto of his presidency, President Bush vetoed it on July 19, 2006. Rep. Radanovich voted to uphold the President's veto on July 19, 2006; the House did not receive the 2/3 needed to override the veto.

Rep. Radanovich does not support using taxpayer dollars for something that is opposed to by so many constituents on a moral basis. In addition, embryonic stem cell research conducted on human embryos is legal using non-federal funds. As of July 2006, no animal or humans have been successfully treated with human embryonic stem cells. As a matter of fact, medical improvements from stem cells have come from adult stem cell research, which currently does not get any federal funding.

## **Federal Lands Issues**

### **Right to Ride Livestock on Federal Land Act—H.R. 586**

Unfortunately, there is an effort by certain groups in the U.S. to eliminate or reduce horseback riding on our federal lands. Horseback exploration of the backcountry is enjoyed by scout and church groups as well as families, and provides wilderness access to senior citizens and the disabled-- groups who otherwise might not have the opportunity to enjoy such an experience. This bill works to support horses and pack animals within federal lands by preserving the use of pack and saddle stock as a natural way for visitors to enjoy federal lands.

In support of these activities, Congressman Radanovich authored H.R. 586. This measure would help ensure the continued recreational use and access of pack and saddle stock animals on National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service and Forest Service lands. The bill has 34 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle and on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2006 this bill received the approval of a majority of the U.S. House of Representatives. The bill was then referred to the U.S. Senate where it did not receive a hearing before the close of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

The Congressman continues to fight for the rights of Americans to enjoy our nation's national splendor through a variety of means of access.

### **Gateway Communities Cooperation Act—H.R. 585**

Congressman Radanovich authored H.R. 585, which was approved by the House on Dec. 6, 2005. Changes and developments in the management of our National Parks and Forests have a definite impact on those who live nearby. H.R. 585 will ensure that communities just outside the perimeter of national parks and national forests can voice their opinions on federal plans.

The act does not mandate that comments be garnered from communities, but does provide the opportunity for those who live in rural, small towns to have their thoughts heard and evaluated. This legislation will effectively broaden the definition of "cooperating" agencies of small towns and communities to include these rural areas. This bill did not receive a vote in the Senate and died at the end of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.



## The Sierra National Forest Land Exchange Act of 2005—H.R. 409

This bill was sponsored by the Congressman on behalf of the Sequoia Council of the Boy Scouts of America. The purpose of this bill is to exchange two parcels of property so that the Sequoia Council of the Boy Scouts, which has operated a recreational camp in the Sierra National Forest for over five decades, will own the property where the camp is based. Currently, the land is owned by the National Forest Service.

Thousands of Scouts use the camp each year to experience outdoor activities and gain leadership skills. Owning the property will allow the Sequoia Council of the Boy Scouts to make improvements to the facilities located on the land. H.R. 409 allows the Boy Scouts of America to provide continued opportunities for young men to learn the importance and actively participate in serving their community.

The bill was approved by the House in September of 2005. Senator Dianne Feinstein was the lead sponsor of this bill in the Senate, which passed with unanimous support in September of 2006. It was signed into law by President Bush on December 1, 2006.

## Illegal Drug Activity in National Parks

At the request of Congressman Radanovich, the National Parks Subcommittee held a hearing in November on illegal drugs being grown in National Parks.

Illegal marijuana cultivation has become a serious problem in California, particularly in Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Most of these marijuana plants are cultivated by individuals linked to Mexican drug cartels. A September 2005 drug bust within the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks demonstrated how prevalent this problem is in our region.

The November hearing put needed pressure on federal agencies, such as the National Parks Service, to focus on this growing epidemic. As a result, we will be better equipped to fight and eliminate drugs being harvested in National Parks and will help protect our families and children from this illegal drug activity.

## Management Policy Changes

When he was Chairman of the National Parks Subcommittee in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, Congressman Radanovich asked the Department of the Interior to review their management policies. Last Spring, Secretary Kempthorne released the draft of the 2006 Management Policies. The 2006 Management Policies favors conservation over public access. While Congressman Radanovich applauds the effort to revise and update the management policies, he believes there should be a balance between conservation and public access to America's National Parks.

## Sex Offender Employed in Yosemite

Representative George Radanovich found it unacceptable that Yosemite National Park has employed a convicted Class 4 felon, sex offender. He was working as a Visitor Use Assistant. In response to this situation, Rep. Radanovich sent a letter to the Director of the National Park Service outlining his concerns that an individual with this criminal background was employed by the Park and had access to children. The letter urged the removal of the park employee from any position that includes interaction with children. The National Park System responded by removing the employee from a public position with interaction with children, to an administrative position, and out of uniform.

While Congressman Radanovich is pleased to hear this employee was removed from a position of authority, he continues to have concerns regarding the National Park Service's hiring practices, which allowed a sexual predator to be hired in a National Park. Congressman Radanovich will continue to explore further legislative options to prevent this from happening again, in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress.

## Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act - H.R. 4200

Sponsored by Rep. Greg Walden (R-WA) and cosponsored by Rep. Radanovich, H.R. 4200 passed the House in May 2006. H.R. 4200 would give federal land managers the tools necessary to restore forestland damaged by catastrophic events in a quicker manner, without waiving environmental laws, if quick action is found to be beneficial to the long-term health and recovery of the forest.

## Stanislaus National Forest Emigrant Dams

On June 8, 2006, the Eastern District Court found the Stanislaus National Forest Supervisor's decision to maintain 11 check dams in the Emigrant Wilderness was inconsistent with the Wilderness Act. As a result, the Forest Service must allow the dams to deteriorate naturally, and can no longer take any action to maintain them.

Congressman Radanovich has been in contact with USDA's Undersecretary Mark Rey and the Attorney General's office in the USDA Environment and National Resources division, in support of the Forest Service appealing the decision.

In addition, Rep. Radanovich took the lead on a letter to President Bush, encouraging him to use the authority granted to him under the Antiquities Act to grant National Monument Status to the Emigrant Wilderness check dam. Representative Doolittle also signed the letter, as he was the previous Representative of the Emigrant Wilderness.

## Sequoia National Forest

Congressman Radanovich cosponsored H.R. 5760 to allow for the continuance of 2 timber sales in the Giant Sequoia National Monument. Under the Executive Order signed by President Clinton establishing the National Monument, timber sales, which were already in progress, could be completed. Conservationists have sued the Forest Service stopping the sales, despite the Executive Order. Representative Radanovich participated in a Forest Health Subcommittee hearing on this bill, in July.

# Fiscal Responsibility

## The Budget

The President's budget proposal for FY07 was delivered to Congress on February 6, 2006. This past year has been extremely taxing on the federal budget. The unforeseen costs of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, along with the cost of supporting the war in Iraq, put additional strain on an already tight budget.

The Congressman has promoted a responsible budget that will best meet everyone's needs and help reduce the national deficit. With this in mind, the Congressman voted for the Republican Study Committee's budget, the Contract with America, Renewed. The document maintained many of the same principles as the original Contract with America that the Congressman signed in 1994. Unfortunately, this measure failed to pass.

On May 18, 2006 the House voted to pass the Congressional Budget for Fiscal Year 2007. The Congressman supported this resolution because the budget adequately addressed budgetary needs of critical programs while maintaining a fiscally conservative agenda.

## Deficit Reduction Act – H.R. 4241

After setting an \$843 billion cap on discretionary spending for FY 2006, Congress took aim at reducing mandatory spending through budget reconciliation. Initially, the House and Senate produced individual versions of reconciliation, which would save \$35 billion over five years. The House version later increased this mark to \$53 billion. After the conference report and further tinkering by the Senate, the final Deficit Reduction Act resulted in \$39.7 billion in savings over the next 5 years.

These savings would come from slowing the rate of growth in federal mandatory spending. Prior to this legislation, mandatory spending increased at six percent a year and consumed 54 percent of the total federal budget. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated if mandatory spending were not slowed, it would consume over 62 percent of the total budget by 2015.

Congressman Radanovich strongly supported a provision in the initial draft of the budget reconciliation, which would have allowed for Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) and Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) drilling. These provisions would have given way to a combined \$2.7 billion in savings. Unfortunately, both provisions were stripped from budget reconciliation.

The Deficit Reduction Act also provides an additional \$1 billion in Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to help those in need with their winter heating bills due to the Hurricane.

The Deficit Reduction Act was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on December 19<sup>th</sup> 2005. It was signed into law by President Bush on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2006

## Tax Hike Prevention

Congressman Radanovich continues to support the President Bush's 2001 tax cuts. By the end of 2006 these tax cuts had put over \$1.1 trillion back into the pockets of American Families. Additionally, these Republican tax policies have exempted five million low-income tax payers from the individual income tax,

Unless all 2001 tax cuts are extended indefinitely, their expiration will result in an instantaneous tax increase of almost \$200 billion. These tax cuts were set to expire at the end of 2006. Congressman Radanovich voted to extend these tax cuts until 2010 and continues to work to make these tax cuts permanent.

## **Tax Relief Extension Reconciliation Act—H.R. 4297**

The Tax Relief Extension Reconciliation Act, H.R. 4297, passed the House May 11, 2006 and passed the Senate the next day. President Bush signed H.R. 4297 into law on May 17, 2006. This bill will save taxpayers a net \$10.76 billion in FY2006, \$69.96 billion over five years, and \$69.08 billion over ten years. This legislation will extend the tax cuts that have been one of the major reasons the American economy has continued to surge.

The bill increases for 2006 the exemption for the AMT from \$40,250 (in 2005) to \$42,500 for single filers and from \$58,000 (in 2005) to \$62,550 for married couples filing jointly.

Two-year extensions include a provision to maintain the capital gains and dividend income tax rate at 15 percent. The provision extends the rates through 2010 and is expected to save taxpayers \$20.6 billion. According to the Department of the Treasury, 28 million families will benefit by an average of almost \$990 on their 2006 tax returns and 8.5 million beneficiaries are seniors who received an average benefit of \$1,144.

## **The Tax Relief and Health Care Act—H.R. 6408**

The Tax Relief and Health Care Act was the last major tax extender bill of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress. The Congressman supported and helped pass H.R. 6408 out of the House. The bill was later passed by the Senate and then signed into law by the President. H.R. 6408 includes an extension through 2007 of numerous provisions, such as the deduction for state and local sales taxes that expired at the end of 2005 or will expire at the end of 2006. In addition, a number of provisions, such as the Research and Development Tax Credit and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, have been enhanced to provide more valuable incentives and additional tax relief.

The bill also provides an extension through 2008 of numerous energy provisions that will expire at the end of 2007. Further, the legislation contains a package of provisions designed to improve Health Savings Accounts (HSAs), which the Congressman is strong supporter of. The Senate passed expansion of the Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas exploration was included in the bill as well. Also included in the package was language to modify the Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program. Finally, an increase in payments to Medicare physician payments was also included.

## **Earmark Reform**

Congressman Radanovich worked with his Republican colleagues in the House to reduce earmarks by 37 percent. This resulted in earmark spending that was \$7.8 billion lower than the previous year. Congressman Radanovich also supported the Legislative Line Item Veto Act (H.R. 4890), which passed the House on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2006. This gives the President additional tools to combat unnecessary spending by allowing him to strike wasteful appropriations from spending bills without vetoing the legislation in its entirety, requiring the long process of crafting appropriations legislation to begin anew.

## **ActFast Act—H.R. 4071**

Congressman Radanovich Cosponsored the ActFast Act, which specifically addresses the exorbitant amount of earmarks found in the Transportation Appropriation bill. The ActFast Act calls for a 10 percent across the board cut of all earmarks in the highway bill, then gives the states control of the remaining 90 percent to do with as they wish.

## **Commission on the Accountability and Review of Federal Agencies Act—H.R. 2470**

Congressman Radanovich was also a cosponsor of H.R. 2470, which establishes a Commission on the Accountability and Review of Federal Agencies. Recently, the House Budget Committee released a 421 page report outlining as much as \$100 billion in waste, fraud and abuse throughout the federal government. The purpose of the new commission created in this bill would be to evaluate executive agencies and their programs and submit to Congress a plan recommending agencies and programs that should be realigned or eliminated.

## **The 1% Plan Included in H.R. 3908 and Sen. Con. Resolution 75**

On February 8, 2006, Congressman Radanovich introduced House Concurrent Resolution 337, a non-binding resolution to encourage the Americans to increase their charitable giving by one percent annually. This will benefit our nation's non-profit and charitable organizations without raising taxes and save the federal government money by increasing the resources available to non-profits to support a multitude of community services

Though the Congressman's 1% Plan did not receive a vote on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, the 1% Plan was incorporated into two legislative proposals introduced in the House and Senate. Representative Roy Blunt (R-MO) included the language of the 1% Plan into his Charitable Giving Act of 2005, H.R. 3908. In the Senate, Senator Rick Santorum (R-PA) introduced Senate Concurrent Resolution 75. This measure is the exact counterpart to the Congressman's 1% Plan language. The Senate resolution passed the Senate by unanimous consent on December 22, 2005

## **Telephone Excise Tax Repeal Act of 2005—H.R.1898**

The Spanish-American telephone tax was enacted by Congress in 1898 as a "temporary" tax on telephones to fund the war effort. At the time, only the wealthiest of Americans had telephones. H.R. 1898, introduced by Congressman Gary Miller (R-CA), repeals this tax.

On May 25, 2006 the United States Treasury Department announced the end of the Spanish-American telephone tax. Consumers will no longer have it on their bill effective July 31, 2006 and when they file their taxes next year they will get back the past three years of taxes. Because of this announcement, no further action on this legislation was needed.

# **Foreign Affairs**

## **Recognizing the Armenian Genocide—H.Res. 316**

On June 14, 2005, Congressman Radanovich introduced H.Res. 316, a resolution that would call upon the President to ensure that the United States understands and recognizes issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide that are documented about the Armenian Genocide. The resolution was approved out of the International Relations Committee by a vote of 40-7. The legislation currently has 144 cosponsors.

Though no further action was taken on this bill in the Senate during the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, similar legislation was introduced on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007 by Congressman Adam Schiff, Congressman Radanovich and 219 other members of the U.S. House of Representatives. Following introduction, H.Res. 106 was referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs for consideration. Congressman Radanovich looks forward to working to pass an Armenian Genocide resolution, which properly recognizes this tragedy in history.

## **Support for the Croatian Government—H.Res. 529**

H.Res. 529 recommends Croatia's integration into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Congressman is an original cosponsor of this measure. The resolution was passed by the House of Representatives by unanimous consent on December 14, 2005. As a person of Croatian heritage and Co-chair of the Croatian Caucus, Congressman Radanovich has always been a strong supporter of the Croatian government and the reforms it has implemented since the fall of communism. The approval of H.Res. 529 demonstrates that ongoing reforms being driven by the Croatian Government on the country's path towards Euro-Atlantic integration are reaping significant rewards both domestically and internationally.

## **Congressional Croatian Caucus**

Rep. Radanovich and Rep. Visclosky, along with 44 other members of Congress, announced the formation of the bipartisan Congressional Croatian Caucus in January of 2005. The Caucus is working to further enhance the existing deep historical and cultural links between Croatia and the U.S., in addition to supporting Croatia's efforts to achieve EU and NATO membership status. Rep. Radanovich is proud to be a Croatian American and is pleased the Caucus membership has grown to 50 members.

## **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**

Rep. Radanovich worked with IOM to expand and to bring a polling location to Northern California in January 2006 for the benefit of Assyrian's of Iraqi ethnicity who were eligible to vote. It was an honor for the Congressman to help his constituents vote in the historic elections in Iraq in 2005 and 2006.

## **Congressman Radanovich Working to Help the Hmong – Lao Community**

In May of 2006, the Congressman arranged and hosted a meeting between representatives of the Hmong communities throughout the United States and officials from the State Department. This meeting was to discuss human rights violations being perpetuated against Hmong refugees in Laos. The Congressman is also working with the Hmong community in the US to arrange a dialogue with the US Ambassadors to Laos and Vietnam to further address this issue.

## **Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act – H.R. 4681**

The Congressman cosponsored this bill, which became a law in December. The law prohibits U.S. aid to and contact with the Hamas led Palestinian government, until it recognizes Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state and honors all previous Israeli/Palestinian agreements. The new law does allow humanitarian assistance to Palestinians to continue.

## **Health Care**

### **HEALTH Act—H.R. 5**

Congressman Radanovich joined together with his colleagues in the House to pass H.R. 5. The health care system is costing us billions of dollars every year and prices are skyrocketing. That is why Congress created some common sense reforms to help lower future costs. One such enhancement was the Help, Efficient, Accessible, Low Cost, Timely Health Care (HEALTH) Act of 2005. The HEALTH Act will make much needed improvements to the system by reducing the amount of frivolous lawsuits and monetary awards from lawsuits that drive healthcare prices up. H.R. 5 was approved by the House on July 21, 2005.

### **Creating Associated Health Plans—H.R. 525**

The Congressman cosponsored and the House passed a bill that was a victory for small businesses, one of the main forces in our economy. The Small Business Health Fairness Act allows small businesses to join together through association health plans (AHPs) to purchase health insurance for their workers at a lower cost. It is important to the economy of the Central Valley that healthcare prices do not force small businesses to close. Small businesses employ more than 50 percent of the workforce, and Congressman Radanovich will continue to support them and our economy.

### **Saving Medicaid from Bankruptcy**

Reforming Medicaid, the state-run healthcare system for the economically underprivileged, proved to be the greatest healthcare challenge facing the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress. Without these changes, Medicaid would have risked bankruptcy, and many governors were worried they would have to trim people of their benefits. Instead, Congress passed H.R. 4241, the Deficit Reduction Act, to give states greater flexibility for state programs, eliminate wasteful spending on pharmaceuticals, encourage personal responsibility, and eliminate Medicaid benefits for millionaires. These changes will help fix some of the flaws in the Medicaid program.

### **Health Centers Renewal Act of 2006 – H.R. 5573**

Along with Congressman Nathan Deal, Congressman Radanovich introduced H.R. 5573 to authorize the appropriation of federal funds through FY2011 for community health centers. These centers provide high quality health care to poor and medically underserved communities. These facilities save taxpayers billions of dollars annually by reducing the need for more expensive emergency room and in-patient hospital care in these underserved areas,

### **Gynecologic Cancer Education and Awareness Act – H.R. 1245**

The Congressman was a cosponsor of this legislation (also known as Johanna's Law) that establishes a national campaign to increase the awareness and knowledge of women with respect to gynecologic cancer. The bill passed both the House and Senate and will soon become law.

### **Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education Act – H.R. 5574**

This legislation, vital to children's health centers like Children's Hospital Central California, authorized five years of funding at \$300 million/year to support the teaching missions at independent children's hospitals. The bill helps

children's teaching hospitals secure Medicare funding that is scarce and often difficult to obtain. With Rep. Radanovich's support, this bill passed Congress and became law last year.

## **National Institutes of Health (NIH) Reform Act – H.R. 6164**

As the Federal government's principal medical research agency, funding for the NIH represents nearly half of the discretionary budget of the Department of Health and Human Services. Rep. Radanovich helped pass the first reauthorization of this vital component of our national healthcare system in 10 years. The bill increases overall research funding authorization levels, but does not designate specific locations for the funding – leaving those decisions up to the doctors and scientists who know best where it is needed. This legislation has passed both houses of Congress, and is awaiting the President's signature to become law.

## **Support of Disproportionate Share Hospitals**

Congressman Radanovich has been a consistent supporter of Disproportionate Share Hospitals over the years, continually fighting to ensure they receive the necessary funding to serve the low-income and uninsured patients. These hospitals, like Community Medical Center, which has approximately 40% of its patients qualifying as Medi-CAL or uninsured, are the back-bone of the Valley's health care system.

The Congressman wrote a letter to Secretary of Health Michael Leavitt, and placed a call directly to the White House to request that these changes not be made Administratively, but be subjected to the same legislative process that would allow all parties with a stake in the issue to be heard and concerns to be addressed. The proposed rule on these changes has not come out yet, but this is still a concern.

## **In the 19<sup>th</sup> Congressional District**

Congressman Radanovich is committed to keeping his constituents well informed of his work in Congress. To this end, Congressman Radanovich maintains a policy of responding to 100% of correspondence sent to him by constituents of the 19<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. Additionally, when not in Washington, DC, Congressman Radanovich makes every effort to meet with constituents on issues that are of concern to them.

In 2005 and 2006, Congressman Radanovich met with thirteen service clubs and community organizations, fourteen Chambers of Commerce and made over 20 radio and television appearances to answer questions and address issues before Congress that are important to his constituency.

## **Immigration**

### **Immigration Task Force**

Rep. Radanovich has been an integral part of a group of GOP members of Congress who are meeting to hash out differences on immigration issues. This group met frequently last year and has been an important forum for congressional representatives to express their views regarding immigration. In the meetings, the Congressman emphasized that comprehensive immigration reform encompassing a guest worker program is of great value to the San Joaquin Valley and the entire nation.

### **Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act—H.R. 4437**

Congressman Radanovich supports strengthening our national security, tightening our borders, and making American citizenship valuable. He believes border security is particularly important to protect our citizens from terrorist threats.

The Congressman did not support passage of the recent Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act, which was approved by the House and is pending in the Senate. Though the Congressman supported the language in H.R. 4437 to tighten our borders, he did not vote in favor of the bill because it was not a comprehensive immigration package that included guest worker reform to address the millions of undocumented workers currently working in the U.S. Without such a provision, the bill certainly did not address the needs of the San Joaquin Valley.

In particular, our economy in the Valley desperately needs a viable guest worker program to address undocumented workers who are here and contributing to our economy. The truth is our nation relies upon such workers in industries such as the hospitality sector and agriculture. The Congressman looks forward to working with the House leadership to create a guest worker program in the new session of Congress.

## AgJOBS Bill—H.R. 884

The Congressman is supportive of and is a cosponsor of H.R. 884, which is the AgJOBS bill. This important legislation accomplishes two main goals: 1) it reforms the existing H-2A agricultural guest worker program by making it less bureaucratic and more practical for farmers to use, and 2) the bill allows, on a one-time basis, current illegal workers with a significant agricultural work history who meet certain requirements to earn an adjustment of status to work here legally.

The truth is our nation relies upon such workers in industries such as the hospitality sector and agriculture. In particular, our economy in the Valley desperately needs a viable guest worker program to address undocumented workers who are here and contributing to our economy. The Congressman looks forward to working with the House leadership to create a guest worker program in the new session of Congress.

Rep. Radanovich has worked behind the scenes to garner support and move this measure through Congress and will continue to fervently work toward its passage.

H.R. 884 is a bipartisan bill developed in cooperation with farmers, farmworker advocates, labor unions, business organizations and many others. However, the bill was not moved in the House of Representatives during the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress. Similar legislation has been introduced in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress and Rep. Radanovich looks forward to working with his colleagues in the House of Representatives as the immigration debate moves forward to ensure that Valley Agriculture is able to maintain a suitable supply to labor.

## Real ID Act—H.R. 418

The Congressman was an original cosponsor of H.R. 418, the Real ID Act. Illegal immigration is one of the most important issues facing the Central Valley, and many people are concerned about our national security and our sovereignty. The Real ID Act includes strong security standards for the issuance of drivers' licenses, stricter asylum rules currently abused by terrorists, and language to close the 3-mile hole in the U.S./Mexico border fence near San Diego. H.R. 418 passed the House of Representatives and became federal law on May 11, 2005.

# Judicial Issues

## Eradicating Methamphetamine—H.R. 3889

Few regions of the country have been as adversely affected by methamphetamine as the Valley. More than 15,000 people a year receive drug treatment for meth alone in Madera, Fresno, and Merced counties. Due to the remote nature of these counties, large Mexican drug gangs have set-up super-labs that can produce up to 120 lbs. of meth in a cycle. While aggressive law enforcement has led to a decline in these super-labs, they are still a problem, as are numerous small labs.

Not only does meth, a highly addictive drug, destroy the lives of its users and lead to more crime, it destroys the lives of those around the users. No drug is associated with more social problems than meth, especially family abuse. This also increases the cost and work for Child Protective Services, who have to stand in for the parents and places a greater burden on the larger community.

Congressman Radanovich continues to push for tougher legislation regarding methamphetamine. He supported the Methamphetamine (meth) Epidemic Elimination Act, H.R. 3889, when it was approved in the Energy and Commerce Committee. H.R. 3889 will help communities fight meth by restricting the sale of pseudo-ephedrine and placing tighter controls on the importation of the drug from other countries. In the coming year, the Congressman will work with local law enforcement and his colleagues to eradicate the epidemic. No floor action was taken on this bill in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Congressman Radanovich will continue to work with his colleagues in Congress to educate them on the meth epidemic in the Central Valley and enact tougher legislation to take those who produce meth off the street.

## Naming the Fresno County Courthouse after Judge Robert Coyle—H.R. 724

In 2005, Congressman Radanovich introduced H.R. 724, which would name the new federal courthouse in Fresno, CA after Judge Robert E. Coyle upon his retirement from the bench. Judge Coyle is revered for his longstanding effort to develop support for the creation of the new Fresno County Courthouse. He certainly deserves credit for his tireless work in making this new courthouse a reality.

The bill was cosponsored by Rep. Jerry Lewis, Rep. Devin Nunes, Rep. Dennis Cardoza, and Rep. Jim Costa. Both Republicans and Democrats in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approve of the bill, but Senator Inhofe, the Chairman of the Senate Committee that handles the naming of courthouses, does not approve of naming a courthouse after a living person, no matter what his status. Unfortunately, the Senate Chairman's position caused the bill to be put on hold in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress

In the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, Congressman Radanovich worked with Senator Boxer to reintroduce legislation to name Fresno's federal courthouse after Judge Coyle. This bill received unanimous support in both houses of Congress and was signed into law by President Bush on July 5, 2007.

## **Mendota Prison**

Rep. Radanovich has been working with Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA) to restore funding to complete the construction of a medium security prison in Mendota. Though the construction is over half complete, the funds that were appropriated in 2002 to build the prison were rescinded in the 2002 and 2004 Appropriations bills, thus preventing the completion of the prison. Congressman Radanovich submitted a letter to the Appropriations Committee to reinstate the funding to complete the prison.

The Bureau of Prisons did receive funding in the Fiscal Year 2007 Appropriations bill for construction; however it was not specified for the Mendota prison. The Senate's version of the Justice Appropriations bill includes \$10 million for Mendota prison. Rep. Radanovich signed onto a letter with Rep. Costa encouraging the conferees to include the Senate's version in the final appropriations bill. The City of Mendota, County of Fresno, and community support this project and the economic benefits it will bring to Mendota. Congressman Radanovich continues to support the efforts to complete the prison.

# **Labor**

## **Employment Statistics**

Nationally, despite the fallout from Hurricane Katrina and Rita, unemployment rates have dropped across the nation. Currently, the national unemployment rate is holding steady, below 5 percent. As of November 2006, Fresno's unemployment rate was 7.8 percent; Madera 6.6 percent; and Modesto 7.5 percent. This is great news for our region and is a vast improvement over the previous double-digit unemployment numbers that have plagued the San Joaquin Valley. Additionally, the U.S. saw close to 5 million new jobs created over the course of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Congressman Radanovich continues to work in the U.S. House of Representatives to lower taxes for hard working American families, provide a business friendly environment that promotes job creation and ensure the continued growth of the American Economy.

## **Job Training Improvement Act—H.R. 27**

The Congressman cosponsored H.R. 27, the Job Training Improvement Act, which passed in the House on March 2, 2005 and in the Senate on June 6, 2006. The people of our Valley would benefit from H.R. 27 because it enhances the workforce investment system in our nation by strengthening one-stop career centers, promoting access to a more comprehensive array of employment, training, and related services, establishing a targeted approach to serving youth, and improving performance accountability. This bill passed was passed in the Senate with amendments. However, the House was unable to consider these amendments before the close of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

## **The Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the Central San Joaquin Valley**

Congressman Radanovich took the lead on a letter to President Bush requesting the renewal of Executive Order (EO) #13173. The EO established the Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the Central San Joaquin Valley (Task Force). The letter detailed the important socioeconomic impacts the Task Force has had upon the Valley, including the creation of the Regional Jobs Initiative and the CA Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley. Congressmen Pombo, Cardoza, and Costa cosigned with Rep. Radanovich on this request.

## **Regional Job Initiative (RJI)**



The Regional Jobs Initiative has been exploring different means to fund their future developments. Unfortunately, the RJI was unable to secure a Workforce Infrastructure and Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant in early 2006, as well as several other grants they applied for through the Department of Labor.

The Congressman was unable to request an Economic Development Initiative (EDI) grant from the Transportation-Treasury, Housing and Urban Development (T-THUD) appropriation bill due to restrictions on the use of EDI funds. As such, the RJI has been exploring possible funding through the Economic Development Administration (EDA). EDA has consolidated many of their grants into one grant application in an effort to streamline the overall process. The new unified program is called the Regional Development Account (RDA). RDA was funded in the Science, State, Justice, Commerce, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2007 (SSJC) at \$230 million, which passed the House on June 29, 2006. Most of these funds will be granted for helping small and rural communities with economic development. The Congressman will continue to work with the RJI to assist in the application process for RDA funding.

## **Pension Protection Act—H.R. 4**

On a 279-131 vote, with the Support of Congressman Radanovich, the House passed the Pension Protection Act, H.R. 4, on July 28, 2006. H.R. 4 was passed by the Senate on August 3, and then signed into law by the President on August 17. The bill fixes outdated pension rules that no longer serve the interests of workers and retirees who are counting on their retirement savings to be there when they retire. H.R. 4 includes provisions to: tighten funding requirements so employers make more cash contributions to their worker pension funds; close loopholes that allow underfunded plans to skip making cash pension payments; prohibit employers and union leaders from digging the hole even deeper by promising extra benefits if their pension plan is significantly underfunded; strengthen disclosure to give workers and retirees more information about the status of their pension plan; protect multiemployer pension plans for workers and their employers; Give workers new access to face-to-face, personally-tailored professional investment advice; and shield taxpayers from a possible multi-billion dollar taxpayer bailout of the Federal Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

# **Telecommunications**

## **Digital Television Transition Act of 2005**

The Congressman has been a strong supporter of the Digital Television Transition Act. This action will lead to improved television technology, reduce our national deficit by \$9 billion through the sale of the analog spectrum, and free-up the analog spectrum for other uses such as communications frequencies for first responders handling natural disasters and matters of national security. The language in the bill calls for a hard deadline to end the transition on February 9, 2009, with a \$1 billion subsidy program to provide set top box converters for all house holds.

The enactment of this legislation allows for the vacated analog spectrum to be used for a number of things, most importantly, twenty-four megahertz of the spectrum that the broadcasters will return has been earmarked for public safety use and first responders. First responders are in desperate need of this spectrum to ensure they can communicate in a crisis. The Digital Television Transition Act was signed into law on February 8, 2006.

## **Broadcast Decency and Enforcement Act—H.R. 310**

Representative Radanovich joined 389 of his colleagues in voting in support of H.R. 310, the Broadcast Decency and Enforcement Act, which passed the House of Representatives in February 2005. The growth of indecent material on broadcast television has prompted this legislation which amends the Communications Act of 1934 to provide increasing penalties for violators of broadcast standards. These penalties will hopefully discourage "wardrobe malfunctions" and improper language from being broadcast on television and radio, particularly when children are likely to be in the audience. This bill passed the House on February 16, 2005.

In addition, the cable industry recently announced that, in the spring of 2006, Time Warner and Comcast began offering a family tier to their customers.

## **Universal Service Fund (USF)**

Phone companies (both wireless and wire-line) contribute a portion of their long-distance revenues to the USF to provide telecommunications access to rural and low-income areas. A provision was included in the FY 2006 Commerce, Justice and State Appropriations bill, which is now federal law, to extend the Universal Service Anti-Deficiency Temporary Suspension Act through 2006. The USF was further extended until December 31, 2007 as part of the FY2007 Continuing Resolutions.

The Congressman continues to work towards the permanent extension of the USF. In the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, Congressman Radanovich has joined a bipartisan group in his colleagues in supporting H.R. 2054, seeks to give the USF permanent

exemption from the Anti-Deficiency Act, making the USF permanent and ensuring that Americans in rural and underserved areas are able to receive affordable telecommunications service.

## Communications Opportunity, Promotion, and Enhancement Act – H.R. 5252

Rep. Radanovich was a cosponsor and strong advocate for this legislation to streamline access to the video services (TV) marketplace. The bill lessened the burden on video service providers who want to provide video services in a new area. In the past there was a long, arduous process that had to be done in each of the over 30,000 designated franchise viewing areas in the country. The bill allowed video providers to use on federal application as the right to provide video service to any area it wishes to serve. This streamlined process would encourage new competitors to enter the marketplace, which will increase competition for consumers and lower cable rates. It would also incentivize the development of faster and better video, data, and broadband technology. Although this bill passed the House, it was never acted on in the Senate. Rep. Radanovich will continue to support a deregulatory agenda in telecommunications, and work towards allowing consumers access to better products at more affordable rates.

## Call Home Act – S. 2653

This bill directs the Federal Communications Commission to reduce the cost of calling home for military personnel stationed or deployed outside the United States in support of military operations, training exercises, or other purposes designated by the Secretary of Defense. As a strong supporter of our troops, the Congressman supported this bill out of the House and helped it become law late last year.

# Transportation

## Highway 99 to become a Federal Interstate

After much hard work on the part of Congressman Radanovich and his colleagues, Highway 99 was designated to receive future interstate status in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) bill, H.R. 3. The designation will occur provided the highway meets all current standards for an interstate.

This action gives Cal-Trans the authority to make improvements to the highway within the next 12 years to bring it up to interstate standards. Unfortunately, no specific funding was designated for this project, but after many years, this vital north-south artery has finally received the designation it needs. Congressman Radanovich is proud to have worked hard on this project for several years and encourages Cal-Trans to begin improvements soon on Highway 99.

In addition, Highway 99 was designated as a Farm-To-Market Priority Corridor, which makes it eligible for new federal grant dollars.

## The Transportation Reauthorization bill—SAFETEA-LU—H.R. 3

This measure was approved in Congress in 2005 and was signed into law by President Bush on August 10, 2005. The 19th Congressional District received almost \$13 million total in authorized funding. The actual appropriation of these funds will be allocated through the annual appropriations process.

The funds in the bill are split into two categories: highways and transit. The highway funds are authorized for six years, while transit funds are authorized for three years. The projects funded are as follows:

- \$1,200,000 to improve Friant Road in Fresno County, CA by widening the road as well as the addition of bicycle lanes.
- \$2,400,000 to improve the State Route 145 and State Route 99 interchange in Madera which will improve congestion issues in the area.
- \$1,600,000 to improve State Route 219 to four lanes in the cities of Riverbank, Oakdale and Modesto.
- \$2,800,000 to improve 16 roads, one bridge and one bike path in Mariposa County.
- \$2,000,000 to upgrade the existing county highway J59 in Tuolumne, Stanislaus and Merced Counties.

In addition, two transit projects received funding in the 19th District. The first project funded was Operation Clean Air, an air quality improvement consortium that benefits the San Joaquin Valley by working with local stake holders to develop and implement best practices for improving air quality. This funding will be used to develop a program to integrate low-emission vehicles into public fleets and for the development of public private partnerships. This project was authorized at \$836,000.

The second project awarded was for the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) to construct and develop a CNG-Hydrogen transit system with fueling stations and buses for travel through gateway communities for Yosemite National Park. This project was authorized at \$2,090,000.

These projects will not only improve quality of life in the San Joaquin Valley by implementing programs which will have an impact in improving air quality, but will also create jobs and inject funds into the local economy.

## Veterans

### Radanovich Introduces bill to Honor Past, Present and Future Merchant Marine Veterans— H.R. 4338

Congressman Radanovich is proud to honor and recognize the contributions of Merchant Marines who helped us win World War II and those who may be called upon to serve our nation in the future. This year, he introduced the Combat Merchant Mariners' Veterans Benefits Act of 2005, which will provide veterans' benefits to Merchant Marines who serve during wartime. This bill is not limited to World War II veterans, but would benefit all those who have served in conflict for 12 months or longer. In addition, those who are permanently disabled during conflict do not have to meet the length of service requirement. It is important that we help all of those who answer our nation's highest call, even if they are not part of the official Armed Forces.

Congressman Radanovich did all he could to move and support his bill, however the Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee opposed the bill. The measure expired at the end of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress. The incoming Chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee, Representative Filner (D-CA) introduced a similar bill in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, should it be reintroduced in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, Congressman Radanovich would support it.

### Veterans Identity Theft

Rep. Radanovich cosponsored H.R. 5520, Veterans Identity Protection Act, sponsored by Rep. Heather Wilson (R-NM). This bill would have established an Office of Veterans Identity Protection Claims to reimburse for injuries suffered as a result of the unauthorized use, disclosure, or dissemination of identifying information stolen from the Department of Veterans Affairs. It provided for a procedure for expeditious consideration and settlement of identity theft claims against the VA as a result of information released from a stolen VA laptop in May 2006. Unfortunately, H.R. 5520 did not pass out of the House of Representatives before the end of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

## Water and Power Subcommittee

### Chairman, Water and Power Subcommittee

During the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, Congressman Radanovich served as Chairman of the House Resources Committee Subcommittee on Water and Power. This Committee is one of the most important governing bodies in addressing and legislating for the essential and ever-present issues surrounding water policies and the water challenges for the San Joaquin Valley. During his tenure as Chairman, Congressman Radanovich advanced many important issues to California such as a review of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, CALFED oversight, and many other Western water issues.

### Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) v. Rodgers (lawsuit against Friant Water Authority)

In July, the Congressman asked Sen. Dianne Feinstein to join him in urging NRDC and Friant to reengage in settlement talks regarding a lawsuit to rewet the San Joaquin River. The Senator agreed and has been involved with the Congressman in this effort since the summer of 2005.

The parties began meeting in the summer of 2005 and a momentous water settlement was reached in 2006 by litigating parties and third parties, resolving a 17-year lawsuit. The Department of Interior, Department of Justice, Friant Water Users Authority, the Natural Resources Defense Council and numerous third party interests all worked together to develop a settlement to the lawsuit. The historic agreement restores a salmon fishery on the Lower San Joaquin River. It also includes water management objectives to mitigate water losses to farmers that may occur during the restoration of the San Joaquin River, ensuring that the River is not restored at the expense of hard working Valley farmers. Legislation to enact certain portions of this settlement was introduced by Rep. Radanovich in November of 2006 with an identical measure submitted in the Senate by Senator Dianne Feinstein. No action was taken on this bill during the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Again, in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, Congressman Radanovich, along with Senator Feinstein in the Senate, has introduced this essential settlement legislation. Congressman Radanovich looks forward to working with Senator Feinstein and the various stake holders to ensure the passage of this essential legislation.

## **The San Joaquin Valley Regional Water Plan**

Representative Radanovich has joined with Rep. Jim Costa to help create the San Joaquin Valley Regional Water Plan. Rep. Nunes and Rep. Cardoza are also involved in this effort. The purpose of the plan is to bring together seven Valley counties from Stanislaus in the north to Kern County in the south to ensure we have the water we need for population growth, Ag sustainability and the protection of our environment.

The Plan is being facilitated by the California Water Institute at Fresno State. The Institute is already meeting with water leaders and looking at how to gain a better regional understanding of water needs and opportunities.

The group has established four subcommittees to deal with specific issue areas: 1) water supply, 2) water quality, 3) flood control and 4) the environment. The group has created a survey that is being sent out to water managers in the seven counties to determine what our water needs are in the Valley, so that a plan can be developed. Also, the group will determine what policy barriers exist and areas that need to be addressed.

Rep. Radanovich is working closely with his Valley colleagues and Senator Feinstein on the Regional Water Plan. The Members secured \$100,000 in FY06 for the Plan. The funding will go toward an inventory of the water needs in the Valley as it relates to the four core issue areas established by the California Water Institute. Along with the CA Water Institute at CA State University, Fresno, the Army Corps of Engineers is facilitating these efforts and putting time and resources into implementing the Plan.

## **Hearing on Water Supply Vulnerabilities in Sacramento/San Joaquin River System**

In October 2005, Chairman Radanovich held an oversight hearing to assess the potential impacts that natural catastrophes could have on water supplies along the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and the California Bay-Delta. The hearing included an examination of the appropriate government roles, including the Bureau of Reclamation, in helping protect the Valley region from natural disasters.

## **Protecting Sacramento/San Joaquin Bay- Delta Water Supplies and Responding to Catastrophic Failures in California Water Deliveries**

Water and Power Subcommittee Chairman Radanovich held a hearing in April to be pro-active in understanding the chain of responsibility in the event of a natural disaster in California, particularly in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Bay-Delta region. The purpose of the hearing was to ensure that we learn from Hurricane Katrina and ensure that California is well-prepared to address a flood situation or other disruption.

## **Hearing in Fresno to Highlight Water Storage Needs in Valley**

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2005 at California State University, Fresno, Radanovich chaired a Subcommittee hearing regarding water storage in the San Joaquin Valley. Upper San Joaquin River storage, the Madera Ranch water bank, the NRDC lawsuit and other water issues were discussed at the hearing.

As a result of the high levels of precipitation this year, there is much debate on the need for new storage to capture this extra water. In light of pending federal appropriations dollars to build more water infrastructure, this hearing examined ways to meet human and environmental water needs by building new surface and groundwater storage in the Upper San Joaquin Valley.